

CLAIMS:

1. A method of evaluating a threat posed by substance, the method comprising the steps of:

- 5 (a) deploying a plurality of remote sensing units and a control unit adapted to substantially automatically identify the substance and to provide a corresponding report;
- (b) uploading the report to a remote server;
- 10 (c) establishing a hierarchy of threat evaluators, including a plurality of experts having knowledge relevant to making a high-level threat assessment; and
- (d) allowing the hierarchy of threat evaluators to access the report on the remote server via a wide area network.

2. The method as set forth in claim 1, further including the step of
15 providing the one or more data processing and storage servers with evaluation tools for substantially automatically evaluating the report in light of other relevant data.

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3. A method of evaluating a threat posed by a substance, the method comprising the steps of:

- 5 (a) deploying a plurality of remote sensing units and a control unit adapted to substantially automatically identify the substance and provide a corresponding report;
- (b) uploading the report to a remote server;
- (c) identifying an appropriate local reporting authority and an appropriate local reporting policy based upon an actual geographic location of the substance;
- 10 (d) notifying the appropriate local reporting authority of the report in accordance with the appropriate local reporting policy;
- (e) establishing a hierarchy of threat evaluators, including the appropriate local reporting authority and a plurality of experts having knowledge relevant to making a high-level threat assessment;
- 15 and
- (f) allowing the hierarchy of threat evaluators to access the report on the remote server via a wide area network.

4. The method as set forth in claim 3, further including the step of
20 providing the one or more data processing and storage servers with evaluation tools for substantially automatically evaluating the report in light of other relevant data.

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5. A method of evaluating a threat posed by a substance, the method comprising the steps of:

- 5 (a) deploying a plurality of remote sensing units and a control unit adapted to substantially automatically identify the substance and provide a corresponding report;
- (b) uploading the report to a remote server;
- (c) providing the one or more data processing and storage servers with evaluation tools for substantially automatically evaluating the report in light of other relevant data; and
- 10 (d) allowing access to the report stored on the remote server via a wide area network.

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